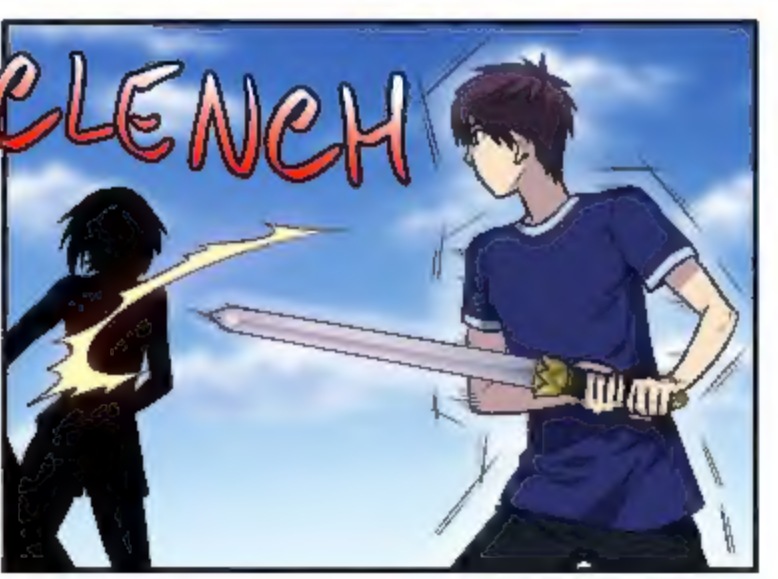
THE GAMER

STORY BY SANGYOUNG SEONG
ILLUST BY SANG-A

<A TEMPORARY PEACE>

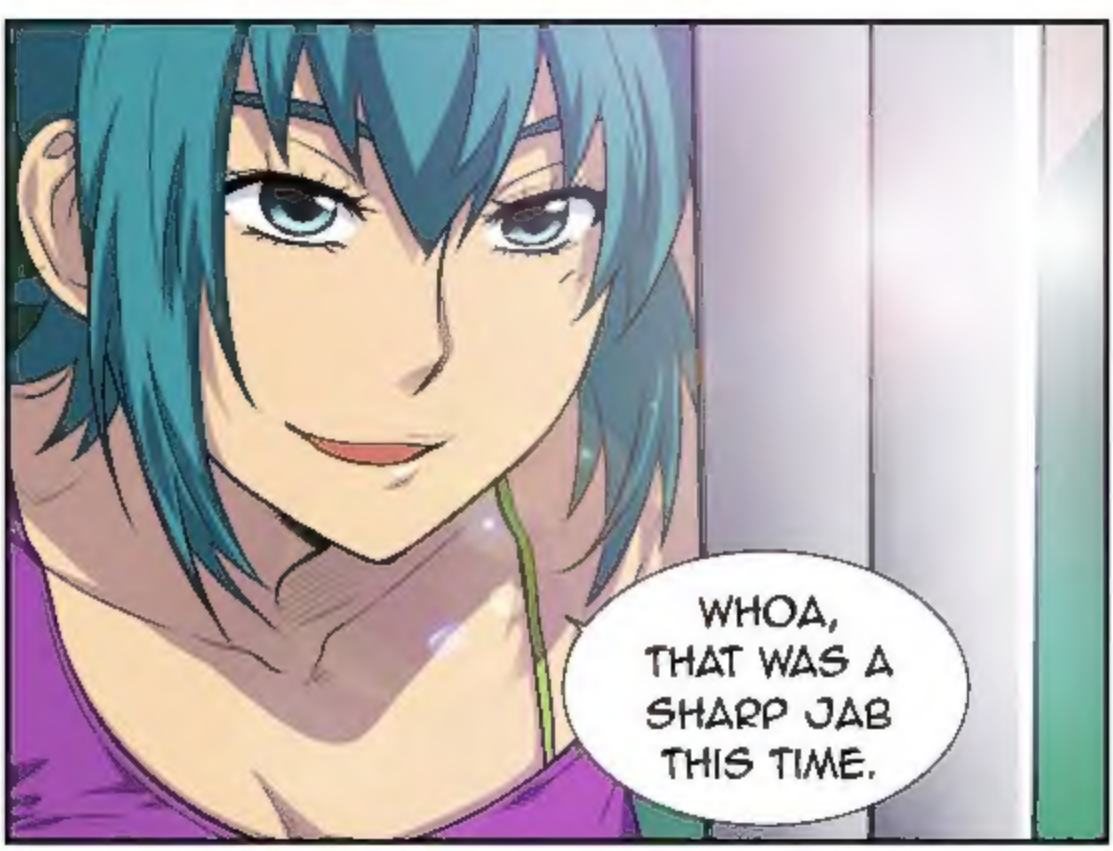
SWING
CLANG

SSK


CLENCH

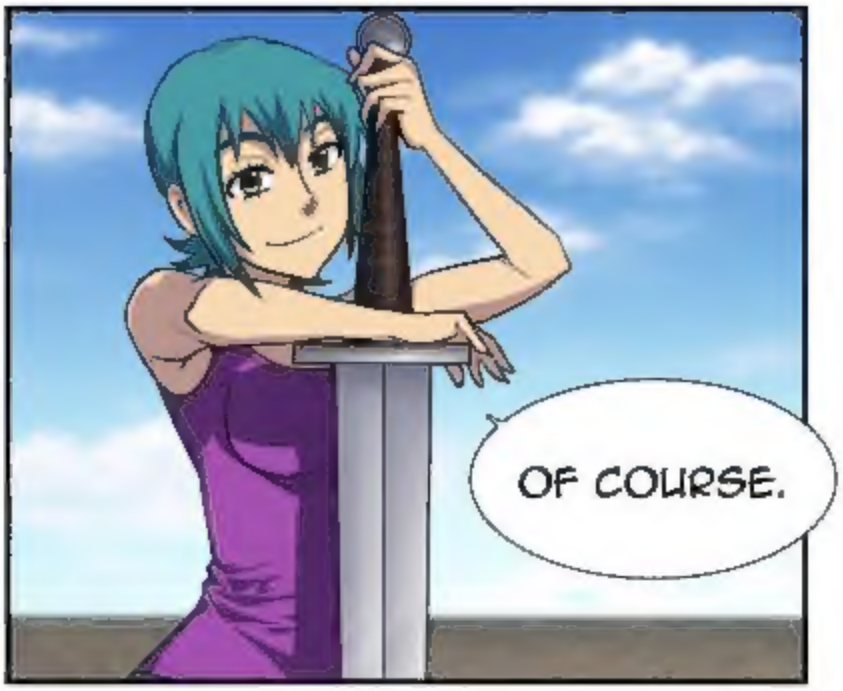
DOUBLE STAB!
SWOOSH

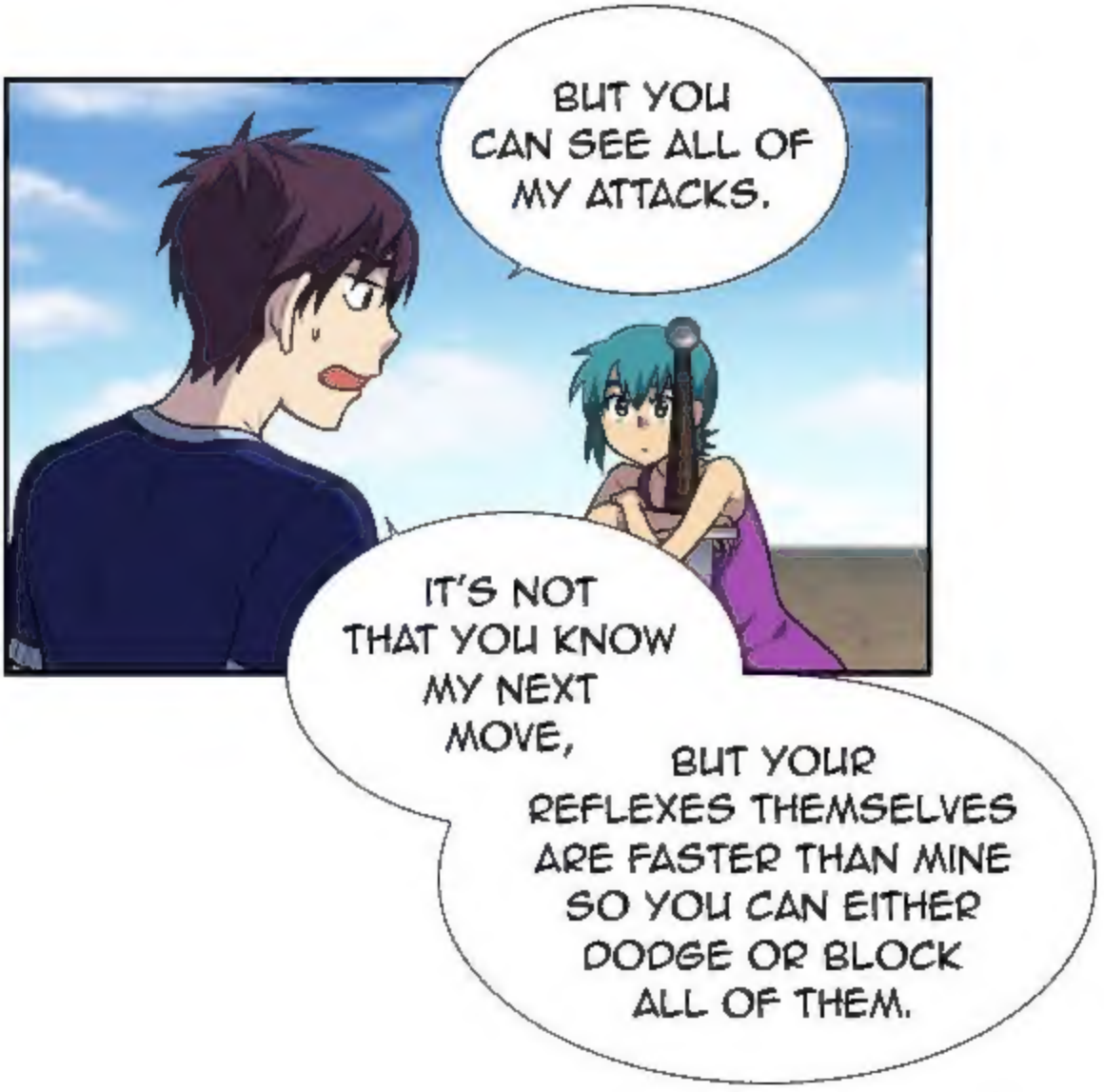
WHISH
CLANG
STUMBLE


WHOA, THAT WAS A SHARP JAB THIS TIME.

UGH... EVEN IF I TRY USING A SURPRISE ATTACK,
MY ATTACKS NEVER WORK BECAUSE HER REFLEXES ARE SUPERIOR TO MINE.

IS THIS... EVEN WORKING?


OF COURSE.

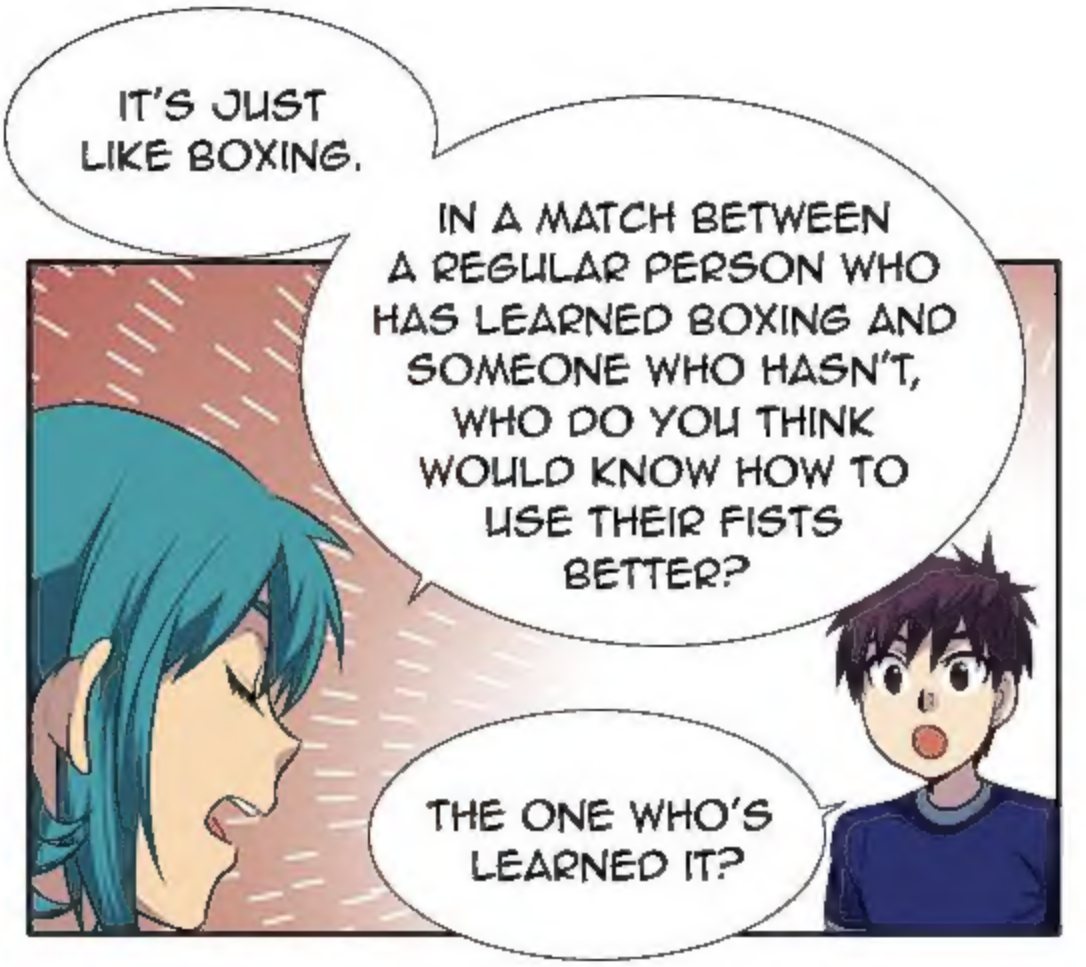

BUT YOU CAN SEE ALL OF MY ATTACKS.
IT'S NOT THAT YOU KNOW MY NEXT MOVE,
BUT YOUR REFLEXES THEMSELVES ARE FASTER THAN MINE SO YOU CAN EITHER DODGE OR BLOCK ALL OF THEM.

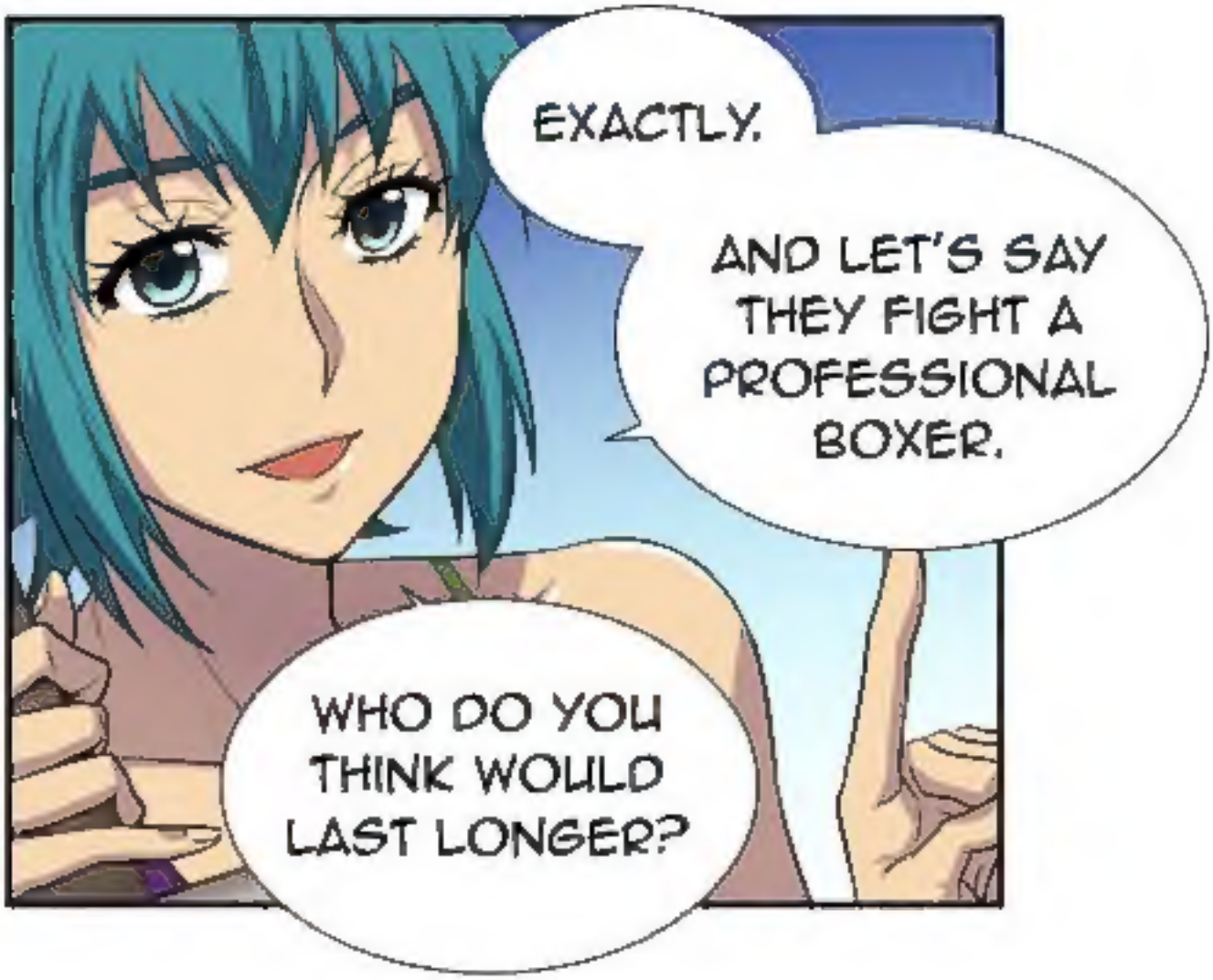
THAT'S BECAUSE I'M AT A HIGHER LEVEL THAN YOU.

I'VE ALSO BEEN TRAINING MYSELF PHYSICALLY THIS WHOLE TIME, YOU KNOW. ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?
THE PART WHERE YOU'LL SEE THE EFFECTS OF THIS LIES IN YOUR PHYSICAL SENSES.
.....

YOU HAVE TO KNOW HOW TO FIGHT IF YOU WANT TO RUN AWAY.
THE SAME APPLIES IF YOU WANT TO BLOCK AN ATTACK.
MAGIC MAY BE CONVENIENT, BUT YOU COULD END UP IN AN UNFAVORABLE SITUATION.

FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE THINGS LIKE BARRIERS THAT STOP YOU FROM USING MAGIC.
AHA.


IT'S JUST LIKE BOXING.
IN A MATCH BETWEEN A REGULAR PERSON WHO HAS LEARNED BOXING AND SOMEONE WHO HASN'T, WHO DO YOU THINK WOULD KNOW HOW TO USE THEIR FISTS BETTER?
THE ONE WHO'S LEARNED IT?


EXACTLY.
AND LET'S SAY THEY FIGHT A PROFESSIONAL BOXER.
WHO DO YOU THINK WOULD LAST LONGER?

AGAIN, THE PERSON WHO'S LEARNED IT?

THAT'S WHAT EXPERIENCE IS.
THAT'S WHY IT HAS AN EFFECT.

YOU HAVE SOMETHING LIKE... A SWORDSMANSHIP LEVEL, RIGHT?
DOESN'T THAT GO UP?

AH... IT DOES, YEAH.
ACTUALLY, IT'S GONE UP LIKE CRAZY.

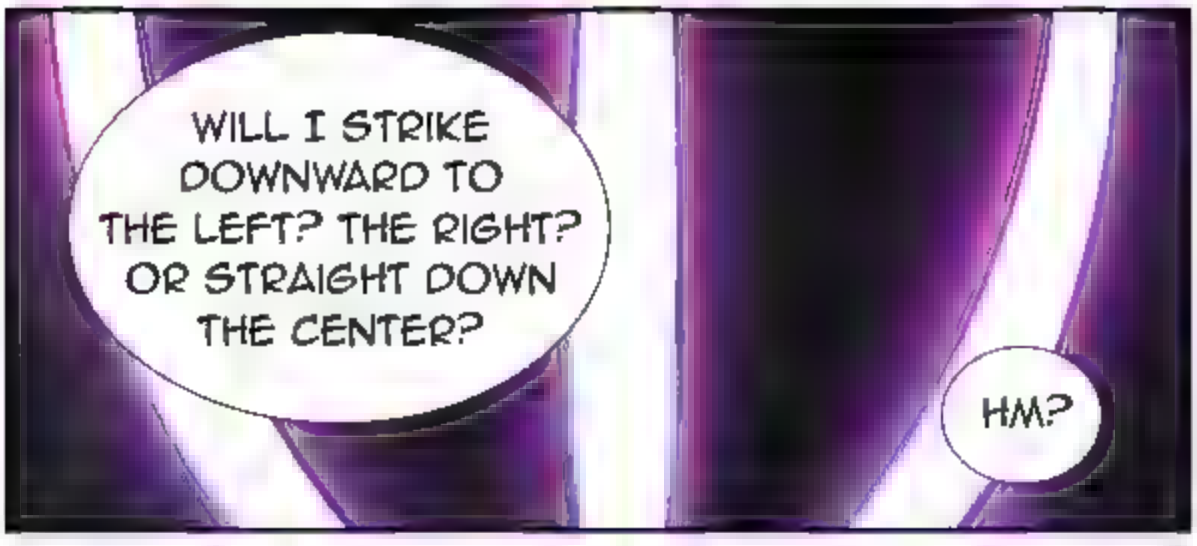
SWORDSMANSHIP LEVEL.
IT'S ACTUALLY AT LIKE 24 NOW SINCE MY LEVEL HAS GONE UP SO MUCH.

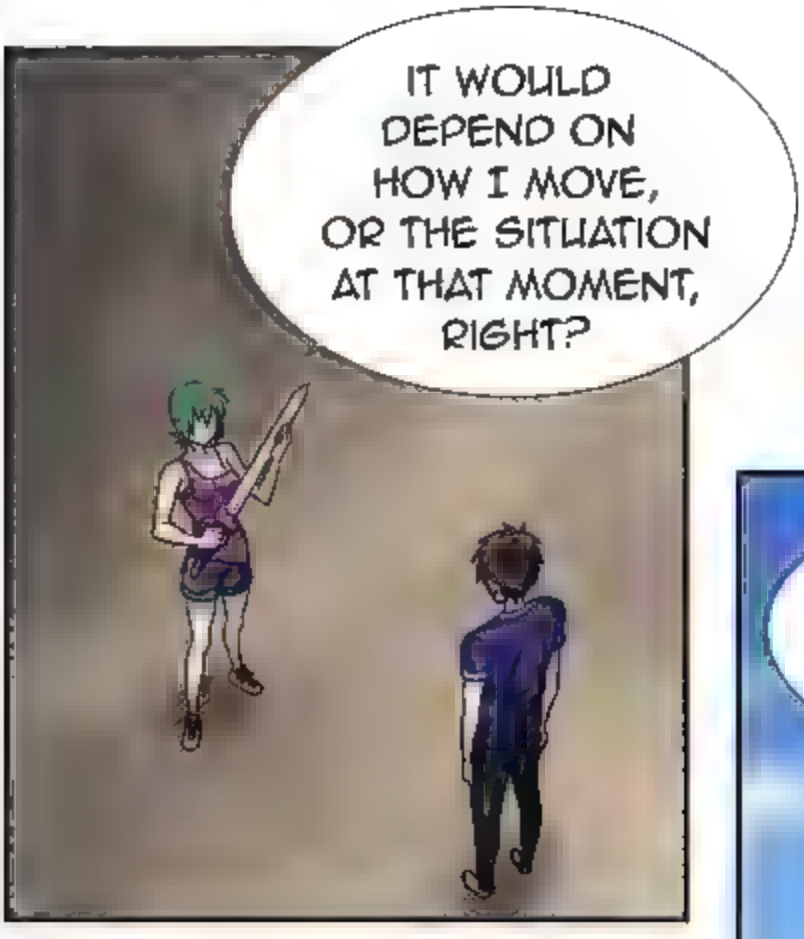
PLUS,
IF YOU PRACTICE CLOSE COMBAT, YOUR JUDGMENT IN BATTLE INCREASES, SO IT'S EVEN MORE NECESSARY.
JUDGMENT?

GIVE ME THAT.

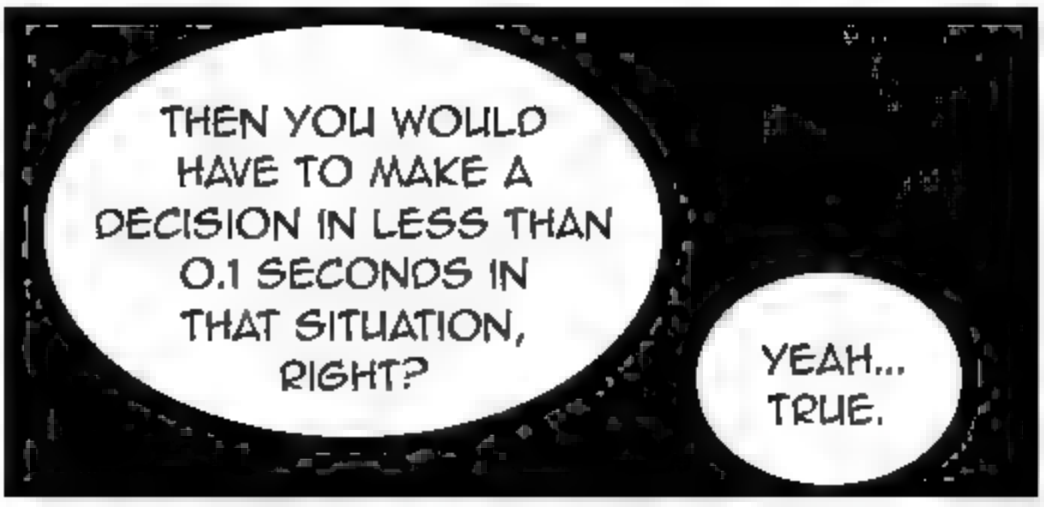
CHIK
FOR EXAMPLE, LET'S SAY I'M HOLDING A SWORD LIKE THIS.

AND LET'S SUPPOSE THAT YOU TRY TO DODGE IT.
OKAY. THEN WHAT?

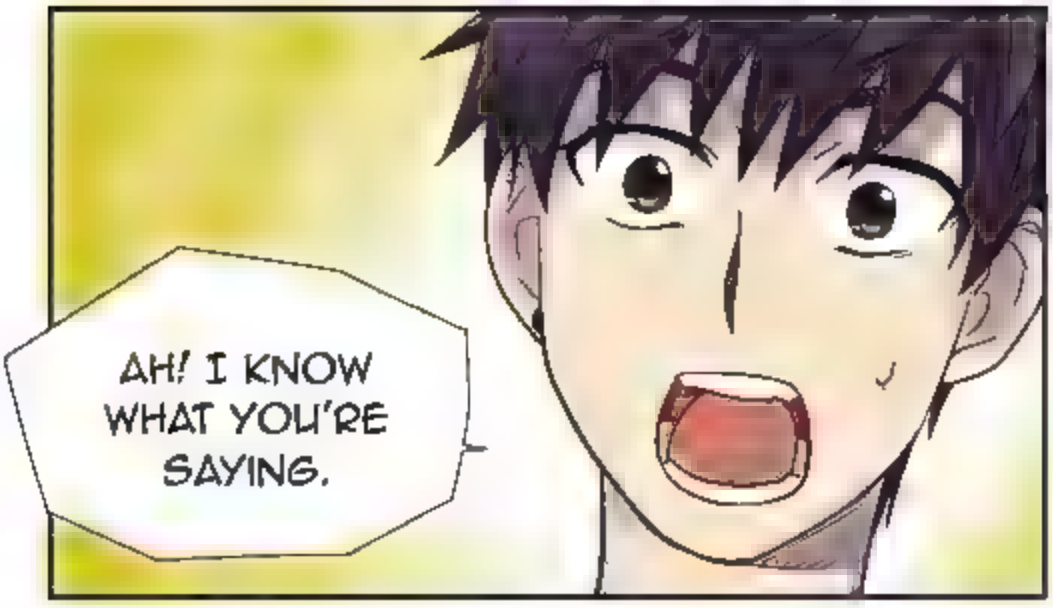

WILL I STRIKE DOWNWARD TO THE LEFT? THE RIGHT? OR STRAIGHT DOWN THE CENTER?
HM?


IT WOULD DEPEND ON HOW I MOVE, OR THE SITUATION AT THAT MOMENT, RIGHT?

HUH? Y-YEAH. I GUESS SO.


THEN YOU WOULD HAVE TO MAKE A DECISION IN LESS THAN 0.1 SECONDS IN THAT SITUATION, RIGHT?
YEAH... TRUE.

WHAT IF YOU EXPERIENCE IT IN ADVANCE?

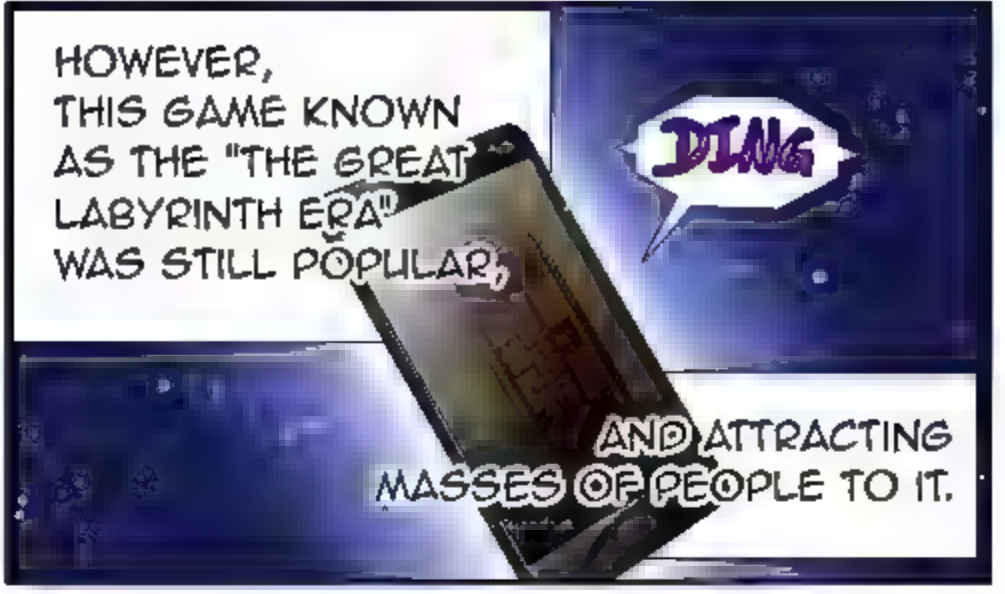

AH! I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

EXPERIENCING IT IN ADVANCE MEANS
MY LEVEL OF JUDGMENT IN URGENT SITUATIONS INCREASES, RIGHT?
THAT'S EXACTLY IT.

THAT'S WHY HARD WORK IS IMPORTANT.
I TOLD YOU THIS BEFORE.
IT GETS IMPRINTED ON YOUR BODY.

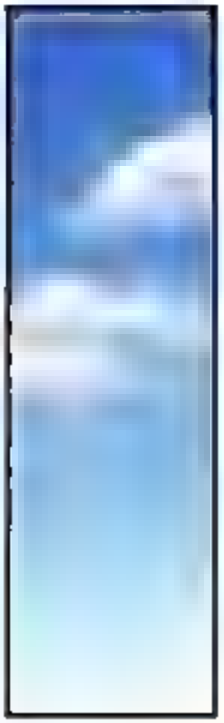
EXPERIENCE IS WEALTH. GOT IT?
YES!!

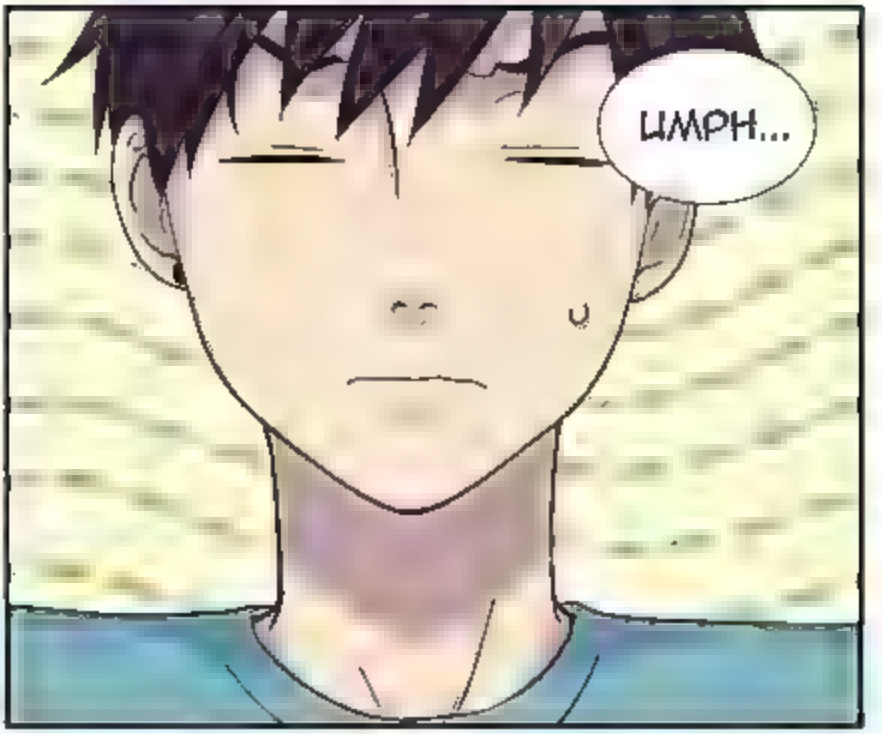
THEN LET'S START AGAIN.
AAAHHH!
AND SO I WAS ABLE TO SAVE PREZ.


HOWEVER,
THIS GAME KNOWN
AS THE "THE GREAT
LABYRINTH ERA"
WAS STILL POPULAR,
DING
AND ATTRACTING
MASSES OF PEOPLE TO IT.

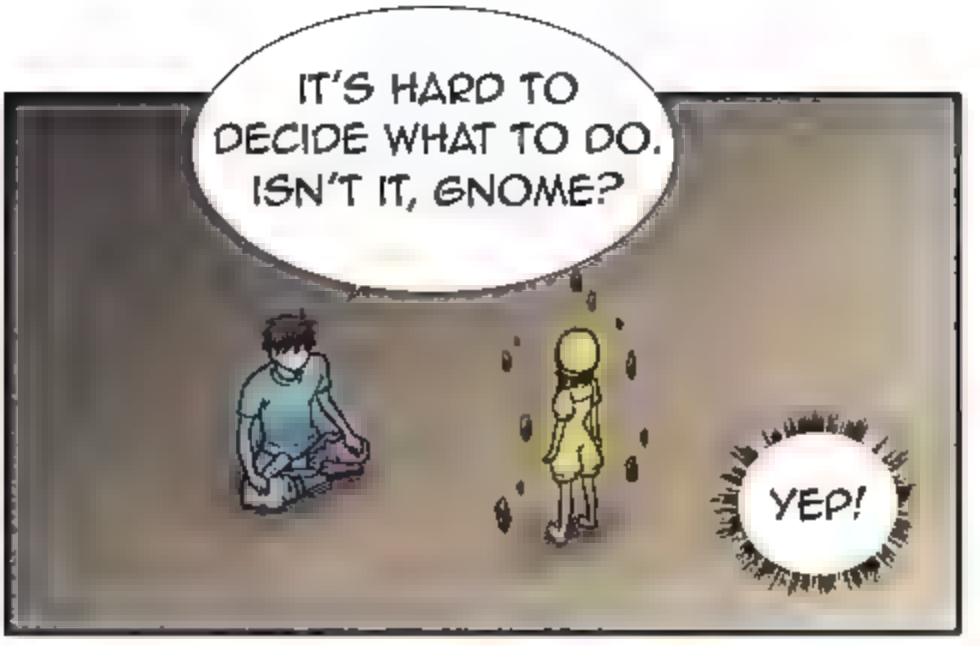
THAT'S RIGHT.
THIS INCIDENT ITSELF
IS NOT OVER YET.

THE GAMER





WHAT SHOULD I DO TO GET STRONGER MORE QUICKLY?
ITEMS ARE PROBABLY MY BEST BET.
SHOULD I GO BACK TO HUNTING, THEN? IT WOULD ALSO INCREASE MY SKILL POINTS.

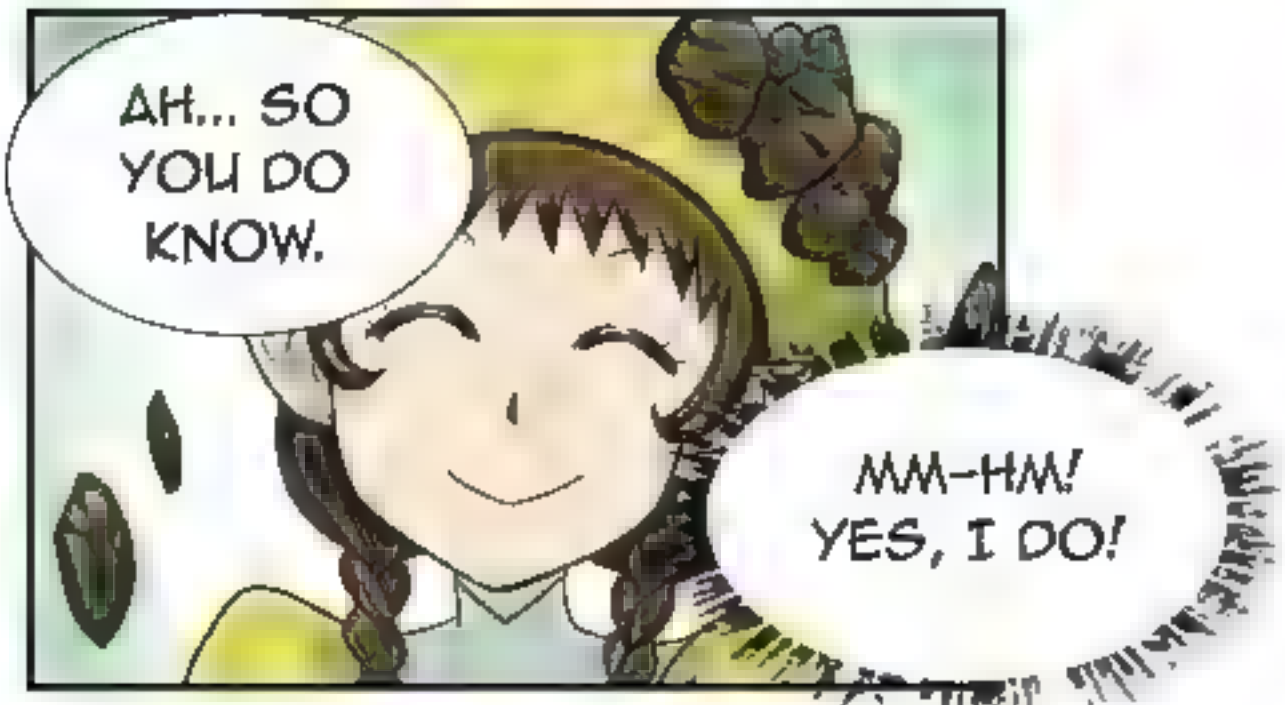

IT'S HARD TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO. ISN'T IT, GNOME?
YEP!

GNOME IS ALWAYS SUMMONED.
ALTHOUGH THAT DOESN'T INCREASE MY SKILL LEVELS ANYMORE...

HEY, GNOME. WHAT SHOULD I DO TO INCREASE MY SPIRIT SKILLS?

AH, NOT THAT YOU WOULD KNOW...
JUST TRAIN YOUR SPIRIT SKILL!

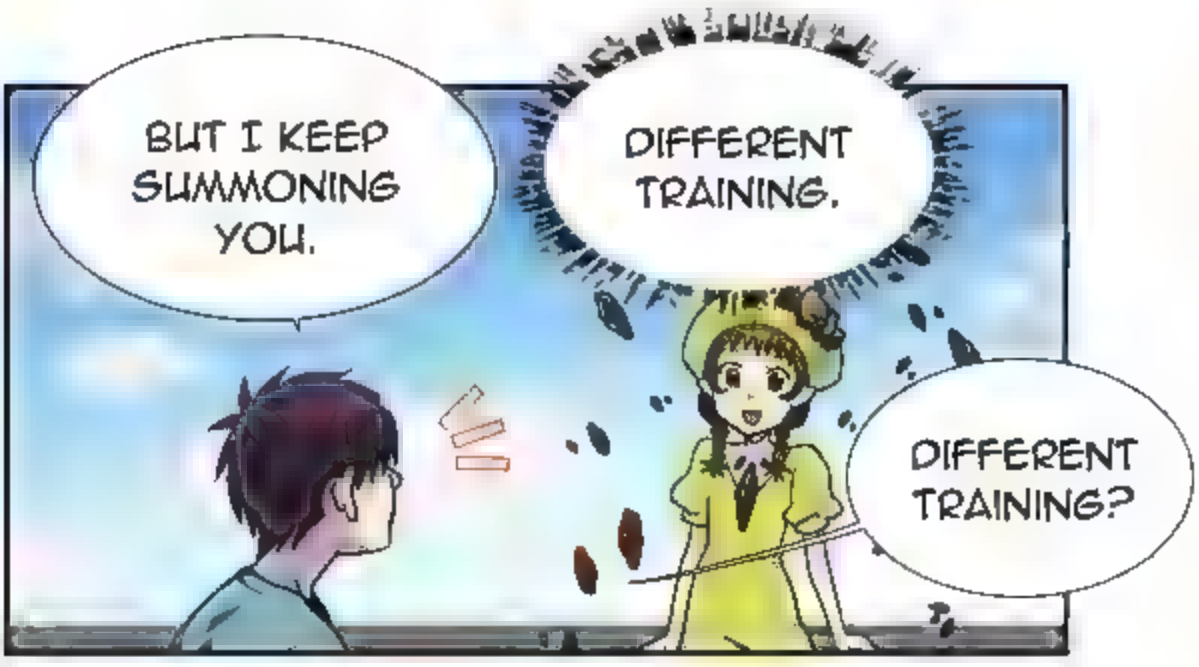
HUH??
JUMP


AH... SO YOU DO KNOW.
MM-HM! YES, I DO!

I-I SEE.
I DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD...
I SHOULD HAVE ASKED YOU EARLIER.
HAHAHA HAHA.

I REALLY MUST BE AN IDIOT. HAHAHAHA.

SO I SHOULD TRAIN MY SPIRIT SKILL TO MAKE IT GO UP MORE?
YEAH!


BUT I KEEP SUMMONING YOU.
DIFFERENT TRAINING.
DIFFERENT TRAINING?

YEAH! DIFFERENT TRAINING.
LIKE WHAT?

SPIRIT SKILL TRAINING.

IT'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT FROM SUMMONING YOU?
YEAH. IT'S DIFFERENT.

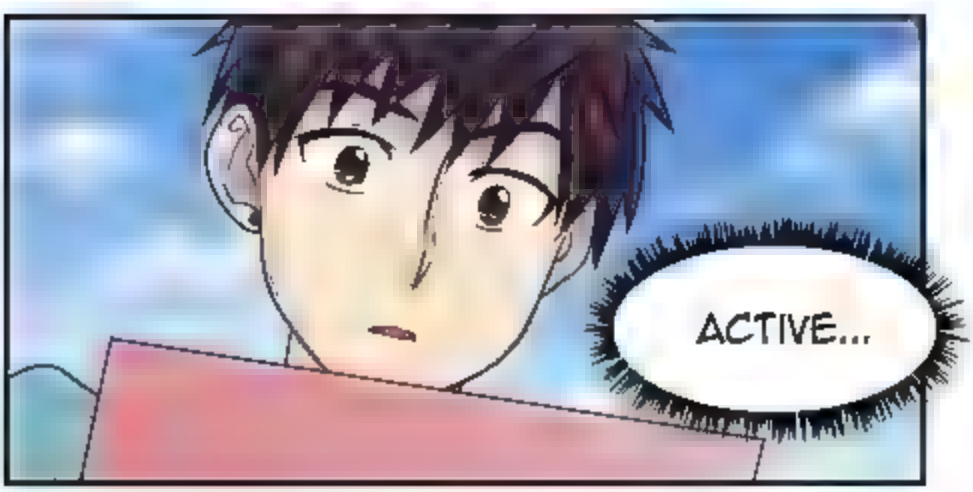
UGGGHHH! SO WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY SPIRIT SKILL TRAINING...?

AH, SKILL WINDOW.

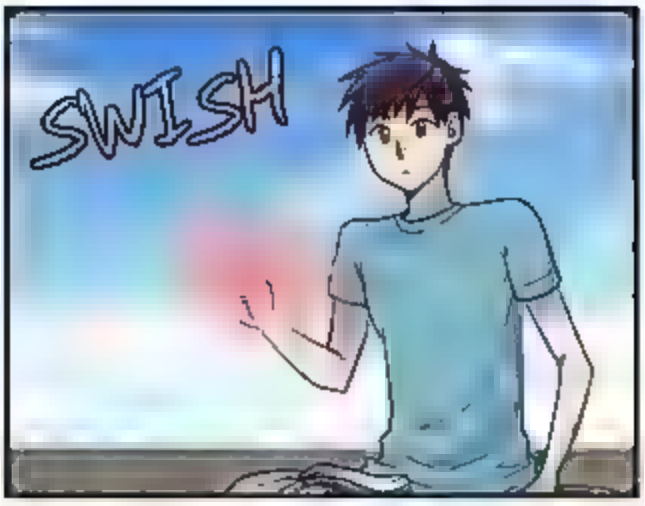
WHISH

[LOWEST-LEVEL SPIRIT SKILL (ACTIVE) LV99 EXP : 99.99% / MP : 1]

A SKILL THAT SUMMONS THE LOWEST-LEVEL SPIRIT
SINCE LONG AGO, PEOPLE HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED
THE EXISTENCE OF NATURE BEINGS AND HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO
INTERACT WITH THEM.
FOLLOWING THIS, PEOPLE CAME INTO CONTACT WITH THE
EXISTENCE OF SPIRITS AND ENDED UP LIVING WITH THEM.
THE HIGHER THE SPELLCASTER'S INTELLIGENCE,
SKILL LEVEL, AND EARTH ATTRIBUTE AFFINITY,
THE GREATER THE SPIRIT'S POWERS,
AND THE HIGHER THE LEVEL OF SPIRIT WHICH CAN BE SUMMONED
CURRENT TYPE OF SUMMONABLE SPIRIT:
LOWEST LEVEL EARTH SPIRIT
CURRENT NUMBER OF SUMMONABLE SPIRITS ONE.



HM...


SWISH

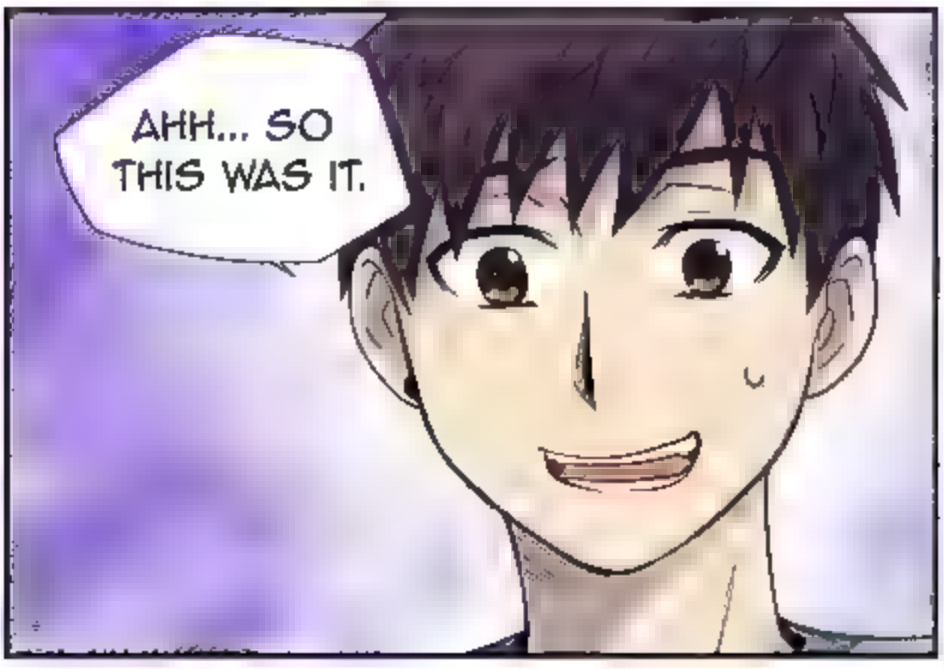
LOWEST-LEVEL SPIRIT SKILL!

DRRRRR

DING

YOU HAVE MET THE CONDITIONS FOR YOUR LOWEST-LEVEL SPIRIT SKILL TO EVOLVE TO A LOW-LEVEL SPIRIT SKILL.

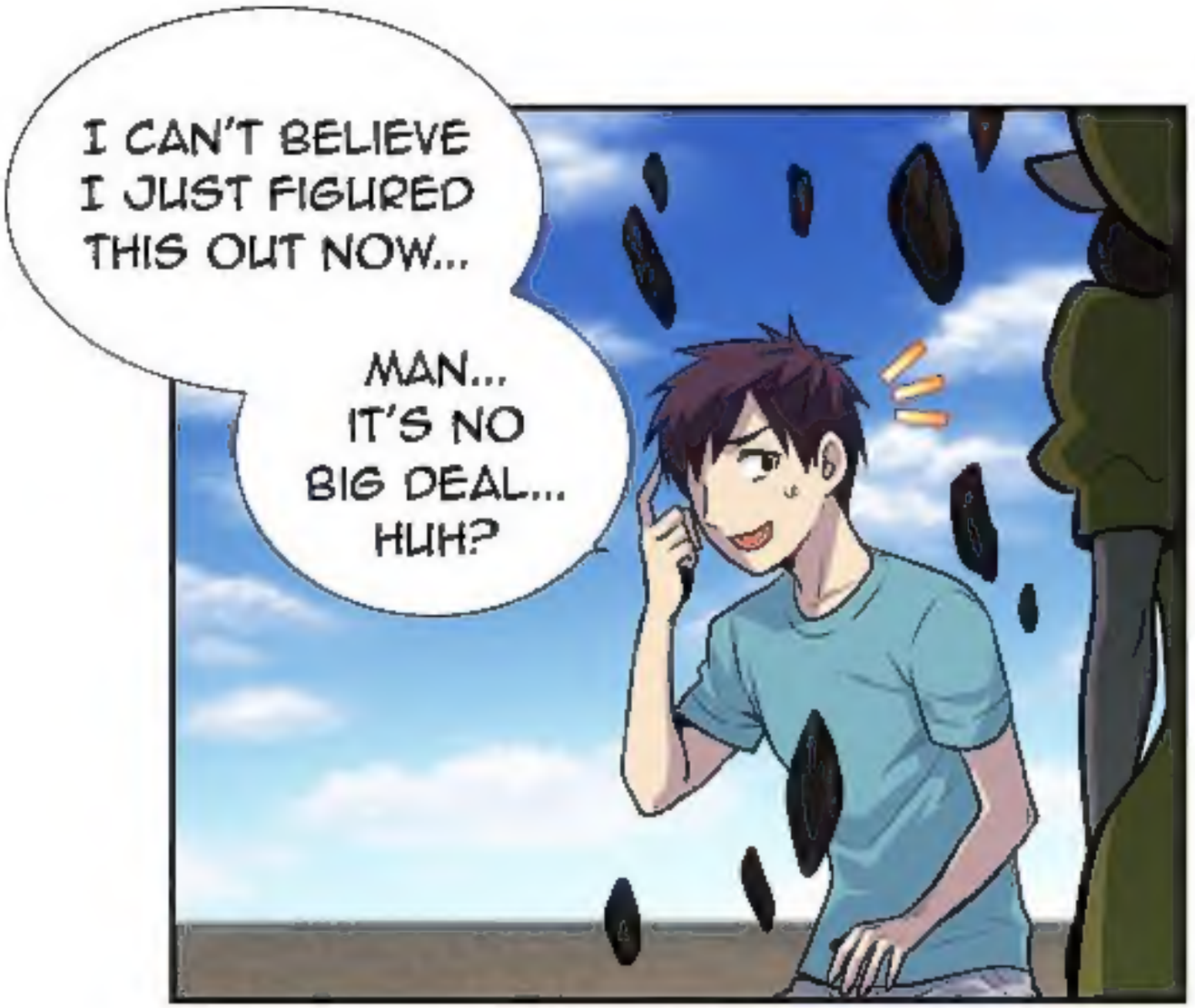
BAM BA RA BAM


AHH... SO THIS WAS IT.

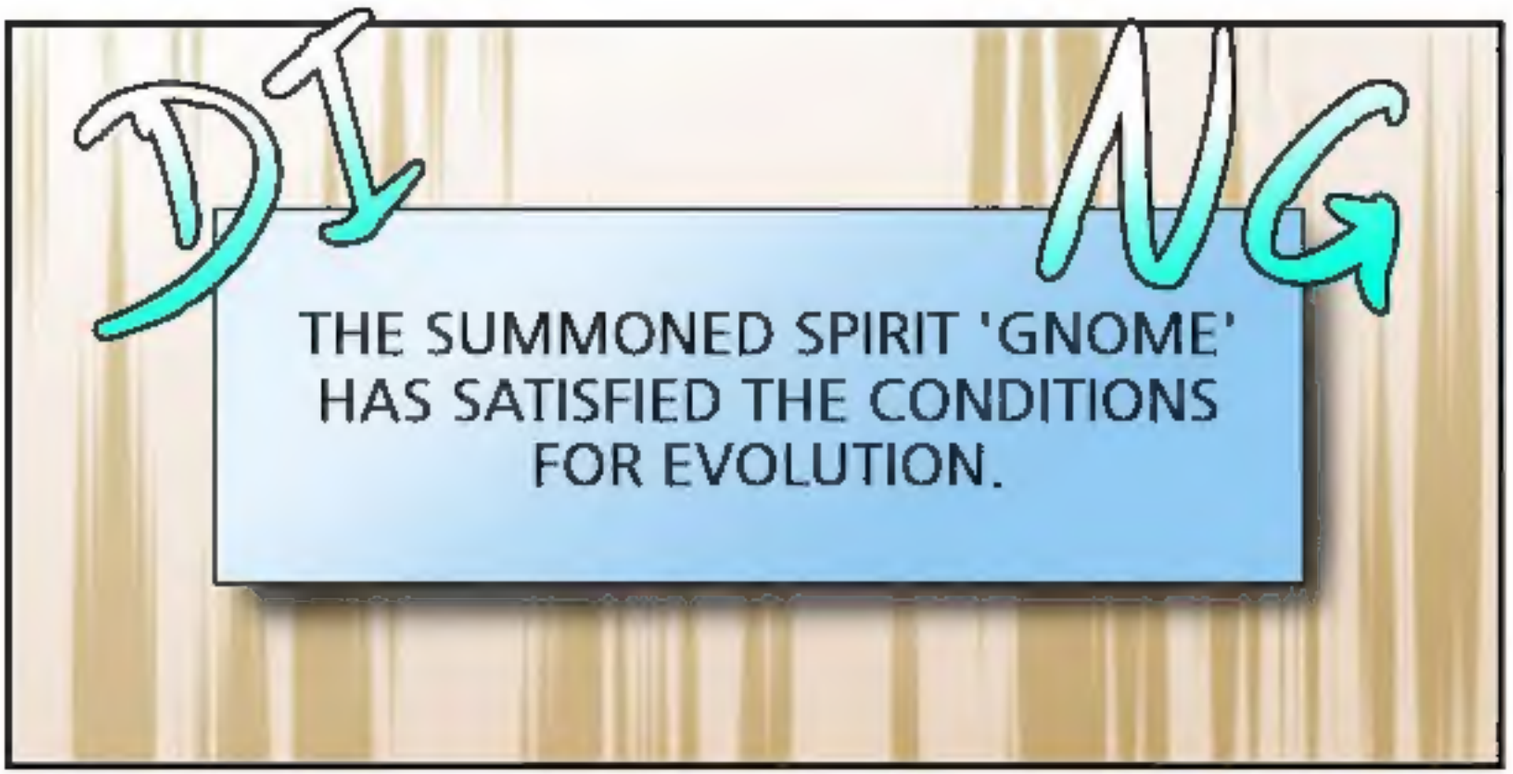
I THINK
I UNDERSTAND IT
NOW.

BREAKING
THROUGH LIMITS,
OR THE SECRETS
OF EVOLUTION.
HOW I DO THEM IS...

BY TRYING OUT
MY ABILITIES
MYSELF.


I CAN'T BELIEVE I JUST FIGURED THIS OUT NOW...
MAN... IT'S NO BIG DEAL... HUH?

FLA
SH
HUH?!



LINE Webtoon